

# HOW FAR WE'VE COME, WHERE WE HOPE TO GO

School Climate in San Bernardino City  
Unified School District



2018 DIGNITY IN SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN CALIFORNIA  
WEEK OF ACTION AGAINST SCHOOL PUSHOUT

In 2015, COPE parent leaders identified that Black and Brown students were cited and arrested by school police at much higher rates than their white classmates. They pushed for District level changes to create positive school climates for all students. In 2016, San Bernardino City Unified School District ("SBCUSD") passed policies on Citation Reform and School Discipline Reform. The Citation Reform Policy had two main goals: reduce school-based arrests and citations and reduce the higher rates of contact with the juvenile justice system for students of color.

The policy clarified that SBCUSD principals and administrators are primarily responsible for enforcing school rules and policies. Under the policy, school administrators cannot call school police to handle routine student discipline problems and SBDPD Officers are not supposed to be school disciplinarians. The policy requires that citations not be given for minor violations, stating: "Arrests or citations shall only be used as a last resort in conjunction with the Progressive Discipline Matrix and never to address instances of non-violent misbehavior, unless there is a threat to school safety."

SBCUSD's School Discipline Reform Policy, "The Commitment to Discipline Reform and Equitable Treatment for All Students," called for a plan for the full implementation of the amended Progressive Discipline Matrix, which will include Restorative Justice practices ("RJ"), in all schools by the 2017-2018 school year.

Public Counsel, on behalf of COPE, submitted a Public Records Act Request to SBCUSD requesting arrest and citation data and documentation of how Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS) and Restorative Justice programs are being implemented and tracked.

**2015:** No individual level data, little data sharing between the San Bernardino District Police Department ("SBDPD") and SBCUSD.

**2018:** The 2017-2018 school year is the first school year SBDPD kept accessible individual level data on race, gender, offense type, and school location.

## DECRIMINALIZATION IN SBCUSD

### What are the results of our community analysis?

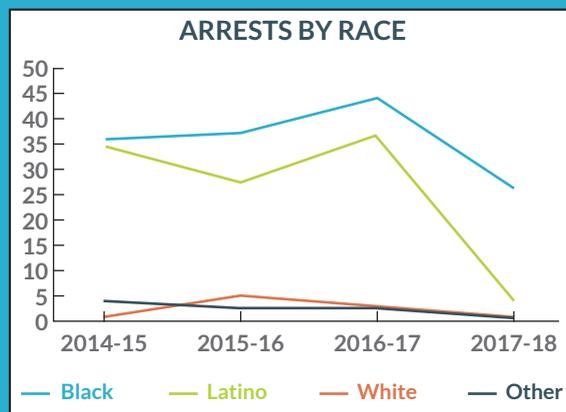
#### THE GOOD NEWS:

2015: 974 CITATIONS



2018: 168 CITATIONS

TOTAL ARRESTS HAVE DROPPED GREATLY FROM THE 2016-2017 SCHOOL YEAR.



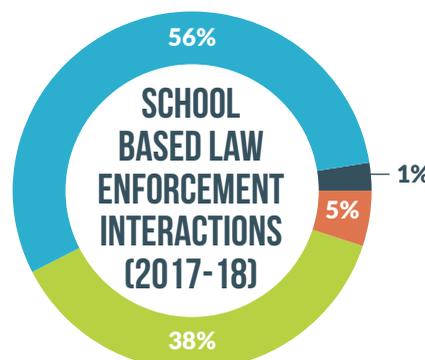
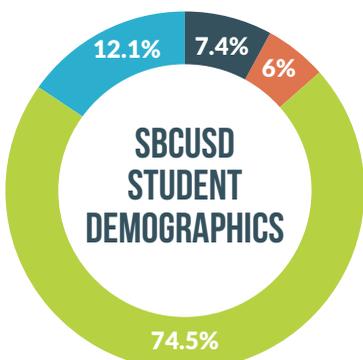
SCHOOLS SPOTLIGHT: BIG REDUCTION IN CAMPUS ARRESTS

ARROYO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL, SAN ANDREAS HIGH SCHOOL and SAN BERNARDINO HIGH SCHOOL

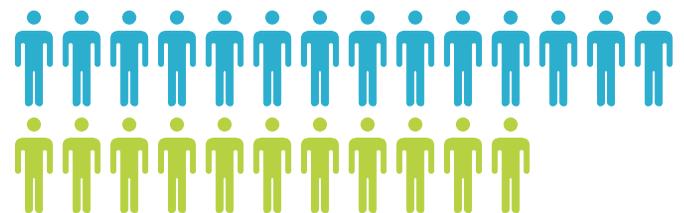
DISPROPORTIONALITY PERSISTS:

Despite decrease in arrests and citations, Black students are still arrested and cited at higher rates than any other group of students.<sup>1</sup>

Black students make up 12.1% of students enrolled in SBCUSD but make up 56% of SBDPD arrests and citations.



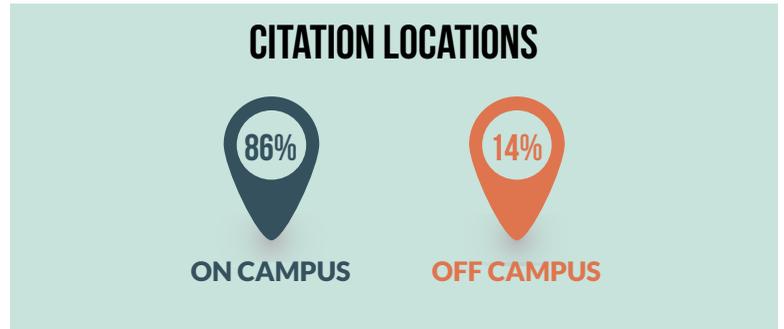
Black and Latina girls are the only girls being arrested or cited by School Police in SBCUSD



<sup>1</sup>"Other" includes: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Two or More Races. The most up to date demographics data is from 2016-2017.

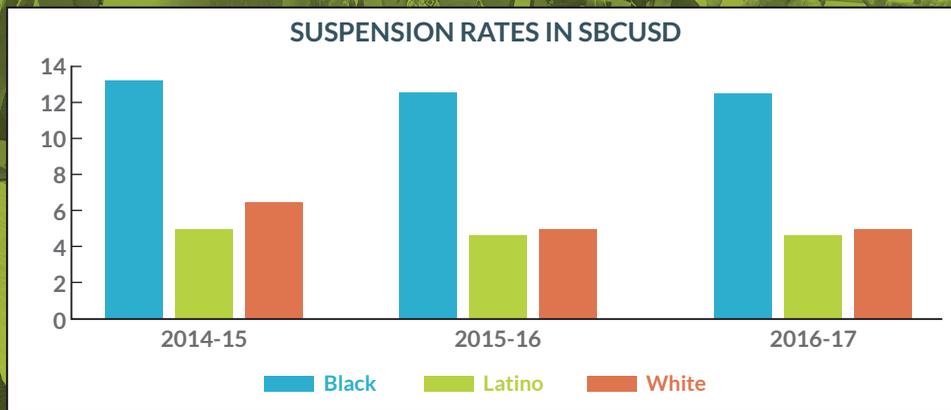
# WHERE DO STUDENTS INTERACT WITH POLICE?

Most citations and arrests happen on SBCUSD campuses and most of the interactions happen at the student's own school



## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE REFORM IN SBCUSD

Suspension rates and racial disparities have remained relatively the same in SBCUSD for the last three years.



## ENDING SCHOOL PUSHOUT: PROMOTING A POSITIVE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

School-site PBIS and Monitoring

### POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS PYRAMID<sup>2</sup>

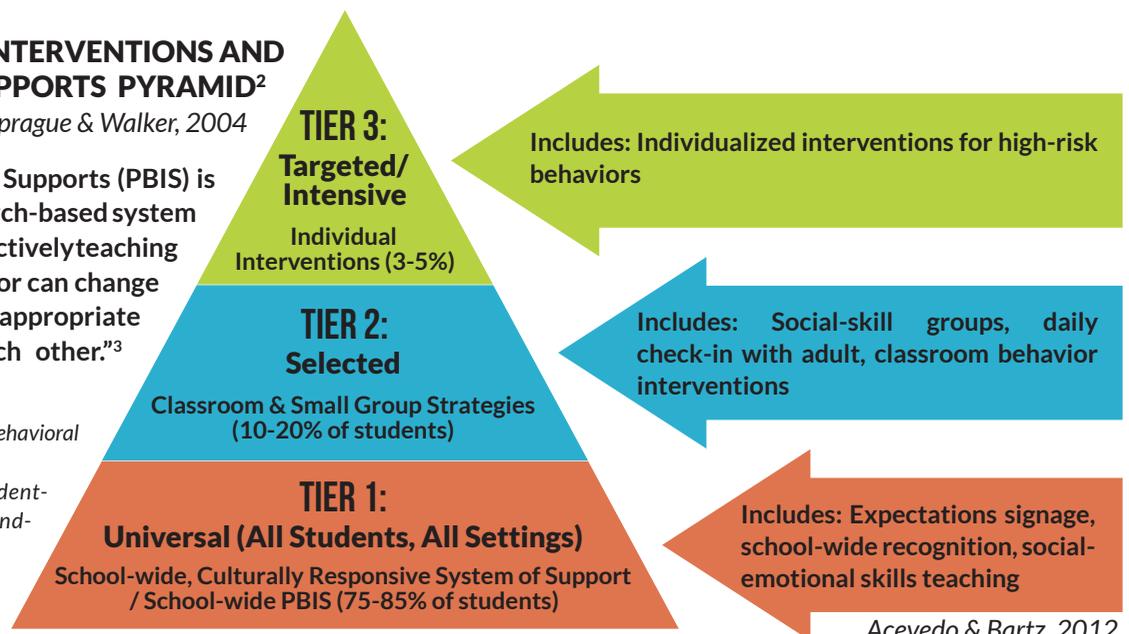
Adapted from Sprague & Walker, 2004

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a comprehensive, school-wide research-based system that is "based on the assumption that actively teaching and acknowledging expected behavior can change the extent to which students expect appropriate behavior from themselves and each other."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Berkley Unified School District, *Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)*, 2012

<https://berkeleyschools.net/departments/student-services/positive-behavioral-interventions-and-supports-pbis/>

<sup>3</sup>Public Counsel, *Fix School Discipline Toolkit for Community*, 12 (2017)



# WHAT DID WE ASK FOR IN THE PUBLIC RECORDS ACT REQUEST?

Evidence from every school-site of PBIS and RJ implementation\*

## OPPORTUNITIES



Of the schools that sent meaningful responses, 1/3 showed promising implementation of Tier I expectation setting and reinforcements!



SCHOOLS SPOTLIGHT: PROMISING TIER II DOCUMENTATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

THOMPSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
and VERMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## CHALLENGES



### 1. DOCUMENTATION.

Most schools did not send meaningful evidence showing consistent review of PBIS implementation. This means most schools cannot readily show parents and communities their progress towards full PBIS implementation. High schools specifically provided very little consistent evidence of implementation.

What could this mean?

- School-sites are not tracking their PBIS/RJ implementation and review of the data
- School-sites are tracking PBIS/RJ implementation but do not have the resources or procedures to easily pull data
- School-sites are not implementing all Tiers of PBIS

### 2. PARENT INVOLVEMENT.

Few schools provided evidence of parent involvement in PBIS implementation at their school-sites.

Reflection Questions:

- What would intentional inclusion of parents in the school community look like?
- What does intentional inclusion of parents in the PBIS implementation process require?

\* Including evidence of regular PBIS team meetings, evidence of parent inclusion and involvement on PBIS teams, evidence of data-based decision making

# RECOMMENDATIONS: CONFRONTING BIAS—A CALL FOR DIALOGUE

COPE Parent leaders want access to regular information and venues to participate in data-based decision-making with school and district partners.

## DECRIMINALIZATION:

- 1 Hold semi-annual community hearings with SBDPD to share data on arrests and citations broken down by student group, gender, age, location and offense.
- 2 Monitor the locations where arrests are happening and the types of offenses students are arrested for.
- 3 Make data transparent and accessible to parents and the community.
- 4 Set clear guidelines to limit the role of law enforcement in school discipline incidents.

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE REFORM:

- 1 Hold semi-annual community hearings organized by feeder school patterns to share discipline data, intervention data and other PBIS implementation efforts with parents. These forums should also focus on creating healing dialogues with families and students pushed out of school by punitive discipline practices.
- 2 Prioritize and invest in positive behavior support resources to minimize referrals to law enforcement for misbehavior that could be handled by the school administration and PBIS team.
- 3 Monitor schools' documentation and tracking of tiered interventions. Provide district-level support to make clear documentation procedures for administrators.
- 4 Encourage and support parent participation in PBIS implementation.
- 5 Provide training and resources to schools to strengthen their team-based implementation.